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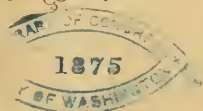
THE
MEMORY
OF
WASHINGTON:
An Oration,

BY THE
REV. NOAH HUNT SCHENCK, A. M.
Rector of Emmanuel Church,

DELIVERED IN BALTIMORE ON THE EVENING OF

FEBRUARY 22nd, 1861.

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BALTIMORE:
ENTZ & BASH, No. 35 N. CHARLES-ST.
JOHN W. WOODS, PRINTER.
1861.

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ORATION.*

Two years ago, and on this day, sacred in the calendar of patriotism, it was my honored lot to participate in one of the proudest pageants that ever glittered in the sunlight. It was an oblation to the Memory of Washington, offered by the great metropolis of the North-West, offered by a city "born in a day" to the memory of him to whom, under God, it owed that pregnant and progressive civilization, in whose mighty throes it had found gigantic birth. It was a demonstration of American feeling, which spoke well for our manhood and well for our country. A procession of citizens, miles in extent, composed of all creeds, all parties, of every rank and vocation, and all fraternizing in the brotherhood of patriots, all harmonizing in the love of our common country, and in veneration for him whose right hand laid its corner-stone; stretching its long drawn lines through the streets and avenues of that great

*This Oration was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Schenck, at the request of the vestry of the Church of the Ascension, Baltimore, the proceeds to be applied to their benefit. The vestry have now obtained Mr. Schenck's kind assent to its publication as a further contribution to the fund sought to be raised for this Church. It is believed that the Christian and patriotic sentiment of this Oration is "a word in season" to the country. Persons desiring copies for circulation will please address Entz & Bash, Baltimore, Md.

city, the Queen of the Lakes, the Venice of the North ; winding its stately march along the lake shore, and then inland skirting the prairie, by the forests of shipping and the humming marts of business, around altars and homes, and embracing all in its moving coil of living and earnest hearts ; appealing to our love of country by unfurling that country's flag, a standard in whose folds the breath of dishonor has never wantoned ; reviving the inspiring memories of our history, and awakening the echoes of '76, by the martial tones of our National Anthems which pealed cheerily on the air, and made the welkin ring ; recalling the past not only, but as if declaring with a silent but actual eloquence, that "peace hath her victories as well as war," and that the present was fulfilling, at least in part, the trust which the past had bequeathed her, presenting in the regalia of moral and philanthropic associations, in the emblems of genius and industry, in the signs of civic worth and wealth, in the implements of honest labor, in the marshalled bands of those prepared upon "occasion quick," to battle the devouring element, and in the serried ranks of citizen soldiery, only waiting the drum-call to action to vindicate their country's honor or defend its shrines, thus evidencing the glories of the present, thus producing to view the ties which bind the people together in social and civil compact, thus telling of the past and teaching of the present, and (as we shall presently observe) prophesying of the future, did the procession of that day move as "a voice walking," proclaiming through the streets in mighty diapason, in blended and harmonious tone, that however the ship of state may at times drift

from her moorings, the broad pennant of her first commander is never to be taken from the mast-head, that however we may be split by faction, however distracted by partisan policies, or even torn by disunion itself, however sunken from the high standard of political virtue, the noble patriotism which distinguished the natal period and early years of the Republic, that despite all the influences of these degenerate days, the memory of Washington is never to fade, the love for the Father of our Country is never to grow cold in the hearts of the people.

Such were the scenes and lessons of that day ; and now when two years have passed, and we find ourselves in the midst of great historic events, I would fain behold those scenes re-enacted, and have those lessons more distinctly impressed. There is a deep and practical significancy now in every effort made to the honor of Washington's memory. There has long been manifest a growing disposition in the American mind, to do ample justice to the character and deeds of the first and greatest of our heroes. Let this disposition now develop and culminate in these days, when we so sorely feel the need of another Washington. Next in value to the state of his august presence in her councils, is a proper appreciation by the people of the merits of his lofty character, and the worth of his patriotic deeds.

When the elder Adams, thrilling with the inspiration of the statesman and the patriot, spoke prophetically of the manner in which the coming generations of freemen should celebrate each anniversary of their national independence, he failed to foresee that the birthday of Washington would one day be hailed by

his grateful countrymen, in its annual recurrence, as no less an occasion of jubilee. And now that we are beginning more amply to appreciate the heritage which his military prowess and his sagacious statesmanship have bequeathed us, now in these times of political craft and meanness, when his virtuous greatness seems in the contrast to shine down upon us with a stronger and more chastened light, the great heart of the nation is pulsating with a more earnest love, and the common mind swayed by a deeper veneration; and now, too, this love and veneration are seeking through various channels to declare their being and their force. I do not regard the biography of Irving, the oration of Everett, or the laudable effort to purchase for the nation, the home and tomb of Washington as agencies which have produced the revival of deep feeling for his memory. They are only the results of this deepened feeling, and yet are contributing not a little to intensify it. It had its fresh stimulus in the exigencies of our present political condition. We have had orations and biographies and efforts to purchase the spot hallowed as his home when living, and now, the sepulchre of what in him was mortal, but never before has a word written or spoken of Washington, never before has an appeal for aid, to redeem to the country the Mecca of her loyal children, so vibrated the chords of love and veneration and patriotism. The splendid pageants which now greet the anniversary of his birth in all our great cities, tell of this rekindled feeling in the heart of the country for the memory of Washington. But even civic festivals and imposing ceremonials are vain to tell of that deep rooted, that burning love

which sways the breasts of Americans, as they hear reverently pronounced, the name of him to whom they owe so much of the glory of their nation, and to whom they are so largely indebted for their liberty as citizens. Let us thank God for the existence not only, but for the present strengthening of this sentiment. The latter is an omen of great good, and that we may to the end of our existence as a nation testify of our gratitude for the gift of Washington, and our joy at the revival of a just reverence for his memory, let us this year, in the midst of a louder acclaim than has ever yet hailed the day, surrounded by ampler and richer testimonials of love than have ever been offered,—and yet in the midst of a thicker gloom than has ever settled upon our country, and yet surrounded by more of the elements of national disruption and suicide, than have ever combined,—thus constrained by circumstances of civil weal and woe, let us on this anniversary of Washington's birth, inaugurate it, or solemnly re-enact it a NATIONAL HOLIDAY. Let this day be celebrated henceforth not by portions of, but by the whole people; not in our larger towns, but in cities and hamlets alike. Let neighboring states send friendly greeting to each other in the booming of cannon. Let "the spirit stirring drum and the ear-piercing fife," the clanging trumpet and the deep trombone unite their tones in jubilant strain. Let our proud banner, with its constellation sparkling with the glories of a hundred victories on land and sea, be flung out to the caresses of the free winds of heaven. Let multitudes of freemen defile through street and highway in dignified procession, as animated by a common feeling

of veneration for, and as marshalled by the spirit of him whose name they honor; and, most of all, let prayers ascend from every altar, that the God of nations will so order the councils of our country and direct its destinies, that each succeeding generation shall more highly honor the name, and more closely emulate and imitate the character and conduct of Washington. So shall we make this day, not an occasion of mirthful or exciting festivities, but of a tempered and holy joy. Let it then be regarded as a civil sabbath to our people. And, as suggested by the analogy of the natural seasons, this anniversary stands related to the anniversary of our nation's birth as spring-time to harvest, so let us hereafter and always remember, as we unite in celebrating these days, sacred to the glory of our history and our national honor, that the birth of Washington was the germinating of that seed which afterward yielded the rich harvest of American freedom and prosperity; and thus shall our political sabbaths, the days of February and July, stand related to each other, not only in the beautiful order of the natural seasons, but in the providential ordering of the great epochs of our country's history, and thus, moreover, shall they through all the coming ages bear witness, that the *true* is always the advance-guard of the *triumphant*.

I have already remarked that the present freshening of Washington feeling is attributable to the present condition of the state. Now, that noble patriotism and cultivated statesmanship and stern political virtue have given place to petty ambitions and partisan schemings and the mercenary lust for office,—now, when many of those whose voice in the Senate or

counsel in the Cabinet would be an earnest of national welfare, retire from the rude jostlings of contending parties, and decline standing in the high places of power if they must stand by the side of those whom they cannot respect,—now, when many of the wisest and purest of our citizens, shunning the vulgar association of demagogues and placemen, are made to feel that “the post of honor is the private station,” the better sense of the people is disposed I think to turn away from the teachings of the present, and seek “the old paths,” the hopeful heart is only confident of the future, as it may now see grafted upon the body politic scions gathered from the old Revolutionary tree. By studying the principles and the men of the primitive days of the Republic, and reproducing in present legislation the prudent policies of those perilous times may we only hope to transmit untarnished to our posterity the heirloom of national integrity. And in this patriotic exercise let us not be guided by the lesser lights, but only by him who like the natural sun, was at once the radiating and gravitating centre of the system of which he was a member. To the *character* of Washington let us go to learn lessons of virtue as christian citizens. To the *political principles* of Washington let us go to gather the elements of sound and honorable and permanent legislation. To the *military career* of Washington let us recur to be taught how to serve our country with unswerving faithfulness and dignified humility. To the *administration* of Washington let us turn for an example of a wise, calm and prosperous rule, for instruction in the most difficult problem of political economy, viz. the adaptation of a

new theory of government to successful practice. To the *last days* of his life let us direct the eye of memory, and contemplate the beautiful blending of greatness and goodness, of the statesman and the christian, of the magistrate and the citizen, and there learn what sweet returns flow to him who consistently and to the end subordinates self to duty, and see what a glory-light gilds the old age of him who never bartered a principle or compromised a truth. To the *sepulchre* of Washington let us go, and while we drop a tear of tribute to departed worth, thank God that we have so pure a shrine, a spot so hallowed, where the lover of his country and his kind may breathe an air of lofty patriotism and heroic virtue. These are the lessons needful to be impressed upon the mind and heart of the country and especially in this age. Our people must be taught to hold the memory of Washington as the palladium of political virtue, as they hold the constitution that of our political existence. And we have reason to believe that the "sober second thought" of our countrymen is beginning to react against the degeneracy of the times. The most wholesome indication of this is the renewed devotion now manifesting to the memory of him who stands in our history as the distinct type of a true American citizen. While then we hail the dawning of this brighter day, let us mark it in the calendar of national events to be hereafter remembered as the period when the anniversary of Washington's birth was first claimed by all the people as a season of general jubilee. So let the birthdays of our country and its venerated Father go hand in hand down the stretched-out vistas of our glorious future, each year

repeating to the ages the story of "the hour and the man" in which and by which the broad foundation of American liberty was laid,—each year pointing the eye of those who officer the ship of state to the constitution as the compass, to the will of God as the pole star, and to the memory of Washington as the chart, by the united help of which our staunch ship shall avoid every foundering rock and outlive every storm.

I do not propose, even if it were possible in the narrow space allotted to a production like this, to attempt anything like a portraiture of the character of Washington, or a delineation of those stirring scenes in which he was the prominent actor,—much less to present you a consecutive argument designed to show the hand of Providence in his timely birth and balanced life, in the incorporation of his noble principles into the organic life of the infant Republic, or the important and diversified influence which the life and work of this great man have already exercised and are still to wield in shaping the destinies of modern government. Rather do I embrace the occasion to say some earnest hearty things about him whose character and career are familiar to every lover of his country, whose name is a household word in every American home and whose fame is our land's chiefest glory. And there is nothing new to be said about Washington. It were a shame to us, if it were otherwise. More than half a century has passed away in the retreating march of time since he closed his eyes upon this land he served so well, he loved so dearly, he honored so highly. Since then he has been the property of the historian, the biograph-

er, the political economist and the patriot citizen. The incidents of his career and the arcana of his character have been blazoned to the world on the classic pages of our history, and it only remains for the coming poet to make them the argument of our yet unwritten American epic. But though volumes have been written and read, though countless eulogies have been pronounced, though the sound of panegyric has floated in deathless cadences upon the air, the ear grows not weary with the story of our Washington. This half century has taken nothing from the freshness of his fame, or abated a tittle of the popular relish for his "eventful history." The more frequently we drink at this fountain the sweeter seem its waters. As we return each time to the contemplation of his life, we find indeed no novelties, no newly revealed features of character or facts of biography, but we discover in ourselves a keener zest, a constantly increasing relish, and, at once, a livelier gratitude that we have so bright a page in our country's annals, so pure a shrine, so wise an oracle, as the common property of all who reverence virtue or aspire to noble deeds. Under the hope that our present excursion may measurably procure for us such results as these, let us linger for a time in the shadow of this truly great man, and rest the eye not upon that greatness, nor upon those principles and deeds of his from which it sprung, but rather upon the consequences of that greatness, as they are to be observed in that period of our history which has elapsed since his death, and as they may be expected in the present and coming time to mark and mould our destiny. Fallen as we are upon "times

so sadly out of joint," I conceive this to be the proper, as it certainly is the practical, treatment of the memory of Washington when it is now made the topic of popular discourse. Let me then open up to view this aspect of the noble theme by presenting you certain propositions, the argument of which however, I regret I have here no space properly to expand or elaborate.

I. And *first: in the character of Washington we have the key to the history of our confederacy as it has unfolded since he left the helm of state.* I speak not of the revolutionary period, the formation of our federal constitution, or his own administration. As predicate of events then enacted, my proposition is self-evident. Then, his brain and heart, his voice and hand were the instruments which conceived and shaped, which uttered and executed the policies for conserving the common weal and advancing the development of American institutions. But when death stopped the working of that busy brain and stilled the throbbings of that faithful heart and stilled that commanding voice and palsied that strong hand, it was impotent to hush the eloquent teachings of his character, or quench the light of those great principles which had governed his public and private life. These have since, and as I would fain believe, are still making an impress deep and broad, as well upon our national councils as upon the common mind of the country. A single citation from our later history must suffice both to illustrate and enforce our proposition. The second conflict with the mother country presents a strange parallel to the first, the Revolutionary struggle. Not so much in the

depressing circumstances which marked our entrance upon both, or in the glorious triumph in which both were terminated, not so much in that the first destroyed the prestige of the vaunted "British bayonet," as did the second that of the no-less-vaunted "wooden walls;" but when we observe the *spirit* which in both conflicts resisted encroachments upon the inalienable rights of the individual citizen, the disposition to contend for no more than a just vindication of those rights, the tempered but determined *morale* of those who bore arms in their country's defence, cheerfully meeting the most fearful odds, feeling themselves thrice armed in the justness of their cause, the grateful joy which pervaded the land when peace was re-established, and the alacrity with which the sword was exchanged for the plough-share, and the quick revival of all the peaceful arts, we cannot but believe that there is in this parallelism of events more than the chanced analogy of circumstances. We must believe that the same living power gave tone and direction to them all; and as all concede that the former conflict in its events and immediately resulting consequences was controlled and directed and stamped by the living presence of Washington, it follows, indisputably, that the latter was in like manner controlled by his still living principles. Nay! both in the war of the Revolution and in the "Late war," and also in their out-flowing consequences, we find re-produced and consistently observed the regimen of Washington's life as an individual. The historical record of both is but the nationalized portraiture of the elements of his character. Thus do we observe Washington's biography to be the prototype of

American history, his life foreshadowing in miniature the maturing character and the developing career of this great republic.

II. Taught by such observations that Washington "though dead yet speaketh," we may go on and safely aver, that *his character is an earnest of our country's future greatness, for so long as we make his life the pattern of political virtue and his principles the guide posts of political progress.* As no hand so pure ever laid the corner stone of a nation, as no influence so salutary ever tempered the elements which entered into national life and character, so may we hope that while our fabric of government bears the impress of that hand, and the influence of him who wielded it continues to be recognized, our land shall not cease to produce those rich harvests of prosperity, which since the hour of her emancipation have made the valleys to sing and the hills to skip with joy. To him who sees God in history our country is not now, has never been, an experiment in government. The only period of our history which may be regarded as experimental was that of the Revolution, and that was anterior to our proper national existence. The triumphant vindication of the principles which entered into that struggle, and the efficiency of Washington's character as a lever for their elevation is sufficient surety to the government which is based on those principles and to the people who emulate the virtues of that character to regard the civil institutions of the United States as permanently established. Nay, how divinely directed seem those counsels which accepted for the frame work of the State the principles which had been tested on the battle

fields of the Revolution ; how divinely ordered the destinies of this land to which has been given as its political Mentor the purest character known to history ; how divinely guaranteed seems that country's future, when the constitution and laws, when popular sentiment and the standards of political virtue are all impressed by the master mind not only but chastened by the God-regarding principles of such an one as Washington. No, the mission of this free land is not yet wrought out, and the power which gave it existence as a nation will sustain it, that it may fill the office appointed it in the coming ages. I do not think this office is to demonstrate the capacity of the people for self-government. Important as this may be in certain aspects, ours is a noble work. If "the powers that be are ordained of God," a calm survey of our history and our institutions must assure us that the American Republic has been consecrated an agency for the development of the moral and intellectual faculties of all orders of men, as preparatory to that final earthly condition of our race as civil and moral beings, to which the finger of prophesy so unerringly points. The *clue* to this theory of our destiny is to be discovered in the character of him who built and launched our ship of state. The *proof* of this theory is furnished in our unexampled progress in those arts which enlighten and dignify and grace the individual ; having already produced, in the practical working of our institutions, a type of character, everywhere to be observed in the rank and file of the people, heretofore unknown to the world, but which is printing on the page of the future records of national glory and individual happiness. The

reality of this theory is forcibly demonstrated at this time when the flinty strata of our character is so much overlaid by the rubbish deposit of the place-man, the demagogue and the fanatical moralist, but which cannot prevent the frequent and bold out-croppings of those essential truths of our political life and those early established laws of our political progress, which I believe to be as indestructible as the laureled rock of the Alleghanies, as enduring as the snow-crowned mountains of California. But these truths and laws, what are they but fragments of that code which constituted and controlled the inner life and public policy of Washington, and which he wove into the texture of the state ; so that whether it be in re-assuming the "masterly inactive" position of "non-intervention" in foreign quarrels, or continuing to "avoid entangling alliances," or again repudiating the claim of "right of search," or opposing the breasts and bayonets of the people to the encroachments of a neighboring power, or expanding the agencies for fostering the genius and encouraging the industry of the people, we still recognize the swaying of that hand which first held the helm, we still hear the clarion tones of that voice whose mighty utterances were the oracles of our country's infancy. And thus onward in the future shall our institutions be borne, working out their high destiny faithful to the purposes of their venerated founder—so long as they conform to his life as a pattern and to his principles as the guide posts of progress.

III. And this introduces a third proposition, viz. *that the memory of Washington must do for this and succeeding ages, what his life did for the first age of the*

Republic. We must make the memory of our country's founder a reality, a living and controlling influence in its whole subsequent history. As the breast of Scotland heaves and the avenging claymore spurns the scabbard at the name of Robert Bruce, and as the "sons of France awake to glory" as they hear pronounced the magic name of Napoleon, so let the name of a greater than either arouse in the "sons of Columbia" a thrilling memory of his deeds and a noble emulation of his virtues. The memory of Washington, the birth-right possession of every American citizen, the heritage of every patriot in every land, is for us and for our children a legacy to be used for the welfare of our common country. Though it be the poetry of our history it appeals not to the brain of the dreamer or the heart of the enthusiast. It is a truer poetry than that. Its cadences blend in the cabinet consultation and the legislative debate. Its truths are for the chamber of diplomacy, the military council, the academy of learning and the retreats of quiet industry. They follow the free plowman as he "stalks afield." They follow the pioneer into western wilds. They follow the mariner over foreign seas. They penetrate the happy seclusion of the American home. They enter the cloisters of our inner life. They make lustrous the stars of our national flag and gild the spires which point heavenward from our public altars. Thus the memory of Washington becomes the poetry of American practical life. Thus presenting it, we clothe it in the regalia of that office we believe it is appointed to fill, and an office for which it is eminently capacitated. Filling this office, it will accomplish for this

and succeeding ages what the life of Washington effected for the age it adorned. And I am not indulging in language of extravagant assertion. Neither would I attempt to dwarf the hideous dimensions of those great national evils, to the correction of which I would invoke the blessed memory of our revered Washington.

I recognize the fact, humiliating as it is, that disunion is an accomplished thing. The merest sciolist in history and government must observe that events of startling magnitude are transpiring before our eyes, events which are to have a more important bearing upon the future of our nation than the ephemera of our political world have wit to see or honesty to acknowledge. Many of these events are such as shall bring the blush to the cheek of our posterity. Do not suppose, fellow freemen of the land of Washington, that these events are the circumstances of national suicide. Do not suppose them to be the prelude to the appalling tragedy of civil war. We have too much of love for country—too much of love for Washington—too much of the fear of God for that. We are doubtless in the midst of revolution; not the revolution of anarchy, however, but the revolution of transition. We are passing from the first to the second era of national greatness. The country is struggling now to free itself from the swathing-bands of its infancy. Its unexpected and unexampled growth has enhanced the difficulty of the effort, and no wonder if in the struggle there should be dislocation or other injury. Still the great child must be free. In its broad and burly youth, in its ruddy and robust strength, it

must put away childish things at whatever cost. I think this is the historical aspect of our present civil calamities. The old issues are effete and mainly ignored. Those which are not ignored are inflated with the poisonous breath of fanaticism and intolerance to dimensions as monstrous and to an importance as factitious as the ambition and ability of their advocates. And here let me not be misunderstood. The exigency seems to demand no change in the organic life of this union of compacted sovereignties. There are no institutions existing under our government which the cause of religion or humanity or freedom or peace requires should be radically changed, much less violently uprooted. But there is a spirit of fanaticism on the one side and a spirit of intolerance on the other which had their birth here in the elements of American colonization, and which have increased in rigidity as the nation has grown, until the strain cramps the body politic to a degree unendurable. These are the swaddling clothes of our infancy from which we now would have the country freed. These are the things, (and we would include both the policy and the politician,) which must be put away even at the risk of dislocation, that the country may mount up to a higher standard of national existence. Every thing has prepared her,—the blessing of God, the energy of the people,—everything that pictures a truer greatness and a broader life enters into the mosaic of that ascending pavement which is prepared for the stately stepplings of the rising Republic. But mounting from one level to a higher is an effort of fearful magnitude to a nation like this, involving as it does so much rending of old

political ties, so much of adjustment and rearrangement. Moreover, while the effort is making, the body politic is to a degree defenceless; the old defences are removed to make way for expansion, while the new are only constructing and not yet adequate to the office appointed them. We are now in this transition state. The change is so full of fearful sights and sounds, is attended by so much of commercial distress, is already signalized by the shattering off from the union rock crystal fragments of great size and beauty, that "men's hearts fail them for fear;" and in the distractions of the present hour know not but that they are surrounded by the signs or even the scenes of national disruption. From the heights of true statesmanship, however, these things are to be observed in their true relations, and thence are discerned but as the penalties of national greatness. Other governments have had trials equal to if not greater than this which ours is undergoing, and have emerged chastened and strengthened. We have had in our short career already more than one crisis, designed to teach us preparatory lessons for this.

A great and a free government invariably records a history chequered with trial and triumph. The greater and more free, and the more brilliant her triumphs, the sharper and more frequent her trials. We have become so habituated to prosperity, that I fear we are poorly prepared for trial. But it has come. Shall we meet it and pass through it bravely and humbly, or like madmen dash into the vortex of anarchy. Are there not elements of strength in our government sufficient for an exigency

like the present? Is there not a patriotic sentiment which can safely steer our ship of state through breakers like these? Can we not experience the convulsions incident to the change from childhood to youth, the first great trial of our republican life, without sinking apathetically; and suffering disintegration as though it were our manifest destiny; expiring miserably, as though the past had no glories, the present no encouragements and the future no hopes? May I say that I am deeply convinced that the dark side of this picture is a fancy which is never to be reduced to a fact. Not but what the skies may yet grow darker, not but what government perplexity and commercial disaster may yet increase, not but what we may have years of distraction, with a ruined commerce, a broken credit and an almost infinite complication of inter-state difficulties. These things may come, but these things will pass away. And as they come not without a cause, so will they pass not away without the exercise of wholesome agencies for their removal. Let the country have time to breathe—let the people have an opportunity to vote—let the political vampires be exterminated—let the memory of Washington be elevated into a beacon-light, and all will yet be well.

However men may differ upon the many matters now in controversy before the people, I suspect there is little variance of opinion touching one and the most important point of all, viz. that the sentiment of the hour is no corrective for the evils from which we suffer, that no relief is to be found for us in the counsels of our politicians, whether in Congress or conven-

tion, that we must first elevate the tone of the popular mind and heart, bringing them from under the influence of the partisan fury of the day, and impregnating them with the sentiments of lofty patriotism and virtuous citizenship which our grandfathers saw in the life and learned from the lips of Washington.

We are not living in an age of great men. A race of giants has just disappeared from the stage, and the coming men are still behind the scenes. We have little to hope from those who by the mere stress of political necessity are now in the leading positions of the state. We have little to hope from the absolute triumph of any of the rival policies now submitted to the people, but we have *everything* to hope from a general re-kindling of Washington feeling throughout the land; we have the amplest warrant for believing that if our people are freshly instructed in the wisdom of the Revolutionary era, and fired with the spirit which glowed at Trenton and gleamed at Valley Forge and glittered at Yorktown, if the people can be taught to make the memory of Washington the controlling sentiment of their civil life,—there shall be a reunion of the dissevered elements of our nationality, there shall be assuagement of hostile feeling, there shall be restoration of confidence, there shall be resumption of national progress, and renewed expansion of all the great elements of our civil and social constitution. Thus must we make *the memory of Washington perform for this and succeeding ages what his life did for the first age of the Republic.*

As in the times which tried men's souls, the darkest days of the Revolution, he assuaged the jealousies and averted the threatened outbreak between the Southern and New England regiments, so must the genius of his life now be invoked to adjust the geographical differences and extinguish the sectional animosities which distract and divide the country. Let the turbulent spirits of our every latitude turn to the founder of their common country, and behold him as the "chief of that band of patriots who when the parts of our rescued land were dissolving, formed a constitution to substantiate and perpetuate the blessings which the Revolution had promised to bestow." Let them behold him again when called to the chief magistracy, "quit the retirement he loved, and in a season more tempestuous than war itself, with calm and wise determination, preserve the true interests of the nation and contribute more than any other could contribute to the establishment of that system of policy which will I trust, yet preserve our peace, our honor and our independence." Such a retrospect can scarcely fail to bring back the fiery partisan from his insane excursion to the confines of anarchy. Especially at this critical hour would we lift up in wisdom and in warning before the disorganizer, the fanatic, and the spirits of unrest, whose mouths are fixed to trumpets of agitation and alarm, the embalmed and fragrant memory of our country's sainted patron, and while we hold their minds in patriotic contemplation, we would recite to them in the language of a daughter of Baltimore, whose warning words have just been wafted across the sea :

"Brothers beware ; the storm is high,
 Our ship of state strains heavily,
 And her flag, whose spangles have lit the sky,
 Is fluttering—tattered and torn to be.
 God of our father Washington
 Our trust is in Thy arm alone ;
 Count Thou her stars, keep every one
 Peace, brothers, peace."

O then, as the poetry of our history, as the corrective of political error, as the earnest of a glorious future, as the prompting of a common gratitude, let us keep green the memory of Washington. More than sixty years, with their springs of verdure, their summer harvests, their gorgeous autumnal days and their white mantled winters, have laid their offerings on his tomb: more than one generation has passed away, nay, the past year has witnessed the taking-off of the sole survivor of that band of true men, who rallied to the battle-standard of Washington,—but who lived to be visited and greeted on free American soil by the heir expectant of the British throne, the royal representative of that George, against whom the old soldier had borne the bayonet,—there are now but few remaining who have ever looked upon the living form of Washington; and yet we have all seen him; we all know him; we have received and returned the pressure of his honest hand: we are familiar with every feature in his face; that stalwart form has crossed our path in all time of our patriotic reverie; he is a living Washington to us to-day who love and venerate him, as he was to those who knew him by the natural senses. Though dead, he thus liveth. And as he was honored in life, so would we honor him now, and so let him be honored forever.

That we may know how he was revered by those who knew him in life, let me conclude this line of remark by citing a word from the address of condolence presented by the Senate to President Adams on learning the bereavement the country had sustained in the death of him, who had just been declared in the resolutions adopted in the House of Representatives "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen." "Thanks to God his glory is consummated, Washington yet lives on earth in his spotless example—his spirit is in heaven. Let his countrymen consecrate the memory of the heroic general, the patriotic statesman, and the virtuous sage ; let them teach their children that the fruits of his labors and his example are their inheritance." To which replies the President: "His example is now complete, and it will teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens and men, not only in the present age, but in future generations, as long as our history shall be read."

As pertinent to the theme and the occasion, may I be permitted to offer the tribute of a God-speed to that patriotic effort which the women of our country are now making to secure to the nation, as the common property of its citizens, the spot which Washington hallowed to the American heart as his home when living, and as the place of sepulture of what in him was earthy. While warmly seconding the appeal which has gone forth inviting each one to share the honor of presenting Mount Vernon to the American people, I do so from considerations affecting not the memory of Washington but ourselves. His fame does not demand the tribute. It needs it

not. It needs no monuments, "no storied urn or animated bust." He is one of the few of earth, who have risen higher than earth's material agencies can elevate. But it behooves us to be exercised in offices of remembrance and works of reverence, that we may thus keep in view the moral and political lineaments of our great departed chieftain. To this audience, a large majority of whom have doubtless ere this made offerings to the cause in hand, I may present what seems to me a noble incentive to co-operation in this laudable enterprise, viz. that as Washington coined the strength of his manhood, casting into the mint of patriotism brain and heart and muscle, that he might buy and bequeath to us this free and favored land, so should we gladly embrace the occasion to buy, that we may bequeath to our posterity, as one of the treasures of the people, that fair domain whose turf was once familiar with the footsteps of our country's father, and whose drooping willows now sway their long arms sadly over his sepulchre. Thus far the appeal of our warm-hearted countrywomen has met a cordial response. Their labor of love is well nigh complete. We will trust that a still wider and warmer sympathy will enable them speedily to consummate it. As they planned and are now executing this noble work, so shall the glory of it be wholly theirs, and to the honor of American women shall it be said in all coming time, that to them the nation is indebted for the most endearing and enduring memorial of its founder.

Would to God we might fully believe, as I think, without presumption, we measurably may believe,

that the hearty outburst which has this year, despite the gloom, welcomed the anniversary of Washington's birth, may not effervesce in the plaudits of the hour, in the high wrought enthusiasm which pealing bands and streaming banners may inspire. From the cities and hamlets of the West, from the great metropolis of the North, from Charleston and New Orleans, and other centres of population at the South, the newspapers of this morning inform us, "the anniversary of Washington's birth is celebrated with unusual demonstrations of regard." It is a glorious omen. It is to me the first star which has peered forth from the thick gloom of our storm-charged skies. O that these demonstrations may have a meaning for, and make their mark upon the hearts of all the people. And shall it not be so? A few hours more, and this day will be swallowed up in the all-devouring past. Its proud processions, its commemorative exercises, its splendid banquets, its military displays, will presently pass away into the deepening night of forgetfulness. Nay, those who participate in this civic pageantry, will presently take their places in another procession, which moves inevitably onward, never counter-marching, its vanward columns always mounting upon that arch, which spans the dread hereafter; these scenes will be forgotten, and these men will die, but God grant that the feeling of veneration for the memory of Washington, which has this day coalesced the hearts of vast multitudes of our people, may not pass away, may not be forgotten, may never die. Let it continue to coalesce the warm hearts of the American people. Let it bind together, as with silken bands, the

now jarring and dissevered sections of this noble confederacy of states. The memory of Washington is the common property of all the people. North and South, East and West here occupy common ground, can here meet and revive common memories, can read a common history, and here auspicate the future glory of a never-to-be-dissolved American Union. Accept then the Memory of Washington as the genius of American liberty, and the earnest of American greatness. Let it rekindle the wasted fires of patriotism. Let it animate our people to deeds of virtuous heroism. Let it calm the tempest of disunion. Let it rebuke the corruptions of misrule. Let it stimulate the peaceful arts. Let its amber light gild with holy radiance, the roof-tree of the humble citizen, and the lordly dome of the capitol. Our country has had a glorious past. She has basked in the smiles of Heaven. The present is big with hopes and fears. What the future shall bring us we could distinctly announce, were we assured that the American heart would continue to cherish the memory of Washington, and the American mind continue to be moulded by the genius of his character.

I believe that the "word in season" now to our bewildered people is "the memory of Washington." It is idle to attempt to blink the fact, that this confederacy of sovereign states is in process of disintegration. The cohering forces which have held them together, seem so far weakened as to be ineffectual. It is chimerical to suppose that disruption will not sooner or later be followed by conflict under the lead of the now reigning sentiment. Never was there a

time so opportune for pleading the memory of Washington. We implore you, fellow freemen, to open your minds to the wisdom, and your hearts to the hallowing influences of this sentiment, and under its guidance to strive before God among men, by argument and by act, yet to preserve in its integrity this splendid fabric of free and christian government. It has come down to us as a priceless heirloom, a glorious inheritance. O let us not lightly barter our inestimable birthright. By the consecrated memory of those who spared not their fortunes or their lives in securing to us, their children, this invaluable heritage, by the incalculable worth of the great interests—religious, social and industrial, which are dependant for their welfare upon the continuance of peace and order, by considerations of duty to our children and the generations yet unborn, let us recognize it not only as a patriot, but a christian duty to labor in every way, not inconsistent with personal honor and reserved civil right, for the re-construction and perpetuation of the American Union. And it is not yet too late. It is never too late for God-fearing, patriotic, earnest men. It is without the purview of my present purpose, as it is beyond my ability, and unbecoming my profession, to prescribe the political duty of intelligent citizens. But after recalling to you the memory of Washington, and presenting it as the only sure corrective of existing evils, I may be permitted to say that there is a manifest and special responsibility devolving upon the citizens of this commonwealth at this momentous crisis. Our geographical position in this confederacy, the conservative spirit, the warm patriotic

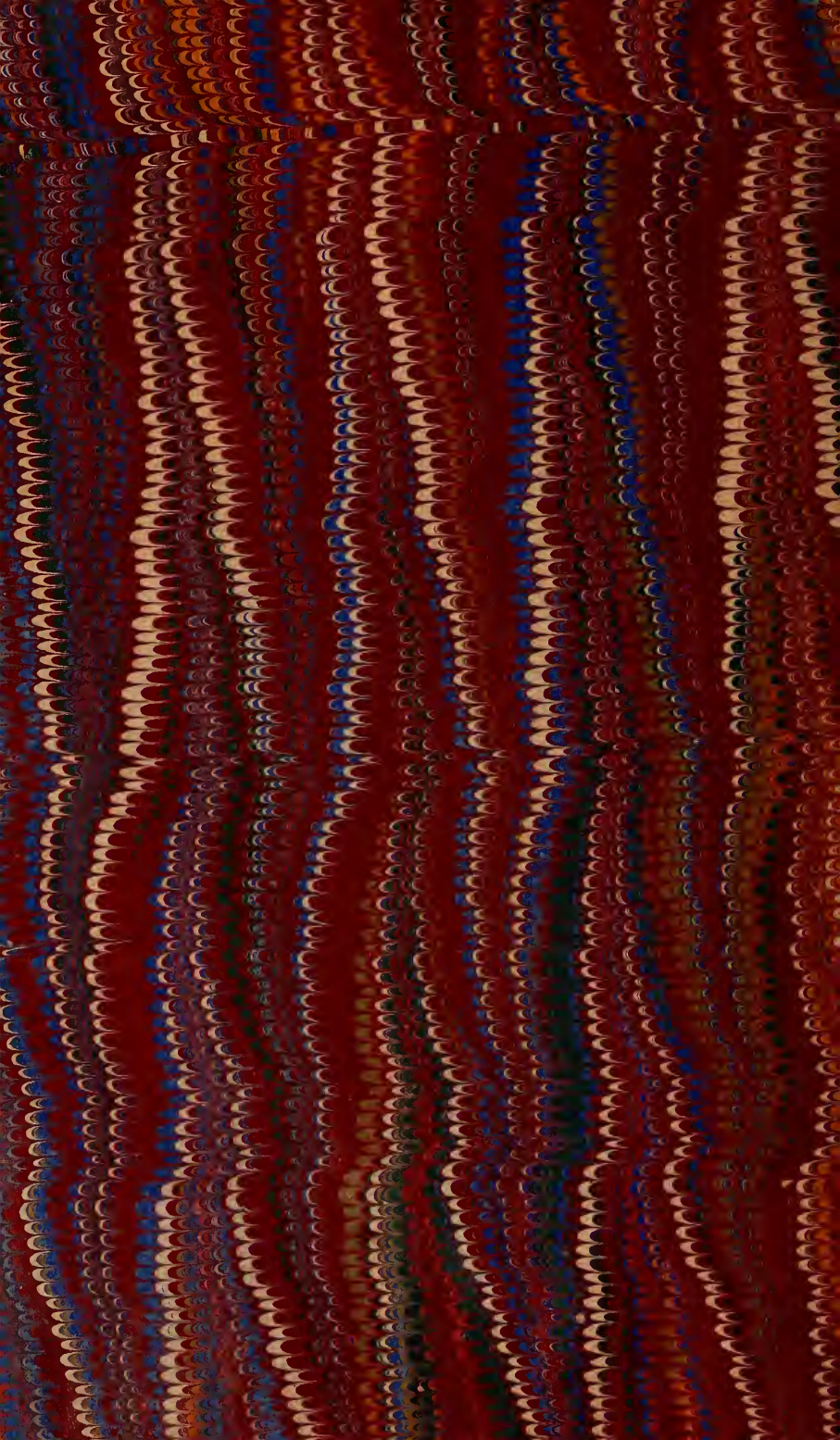
feeling of the people, the local associations of our national banner, as here emblazoned with that noble hymn of liberty which may never be erased from its striped and starry folds,—everything seems to invoke the men of Maryland to stand boldly forth and plead for the integrity of the Union in times like these. Let them and all true men enlist under God every honest agency which may stay the suicidal march of our nation. Let them be animated to the effort by a glow of Washington feeling. Let them be stimulated in the effort, by the inspiring memories of our brilliant history, by the remembrance of what God has done for us and our fathers, by the contemplation of our prosperous and peaceful surroundings, as we stand “full high advanced,” a peer among the nations, and moreover, by consideration of the mighty stake we hold for the future. Our national existence is not so cheap a franchise as to be wantonly wafted away on the hot breath of the demagogue, or the mad shouts of an excited populace. Let temperate debate take the place of infuriated appeals and passionate declamation. Let hymns of concession float upon the wind, and drown out in their melody the hoarse war note, which in threatening undertone is muttered through the air. Let us direct the excited mind of the country away from the present, and occupy it with the past and the future. Thus only may we manacle the madness of the hour, only thus fix the eye of the country upon its duty and its glory. Only thus can we auspicate a future of divine blessing and national greatness. Only thus may we hope to have secured to succeeding and remote generations what was guaranteed by the life and work, and what can only be

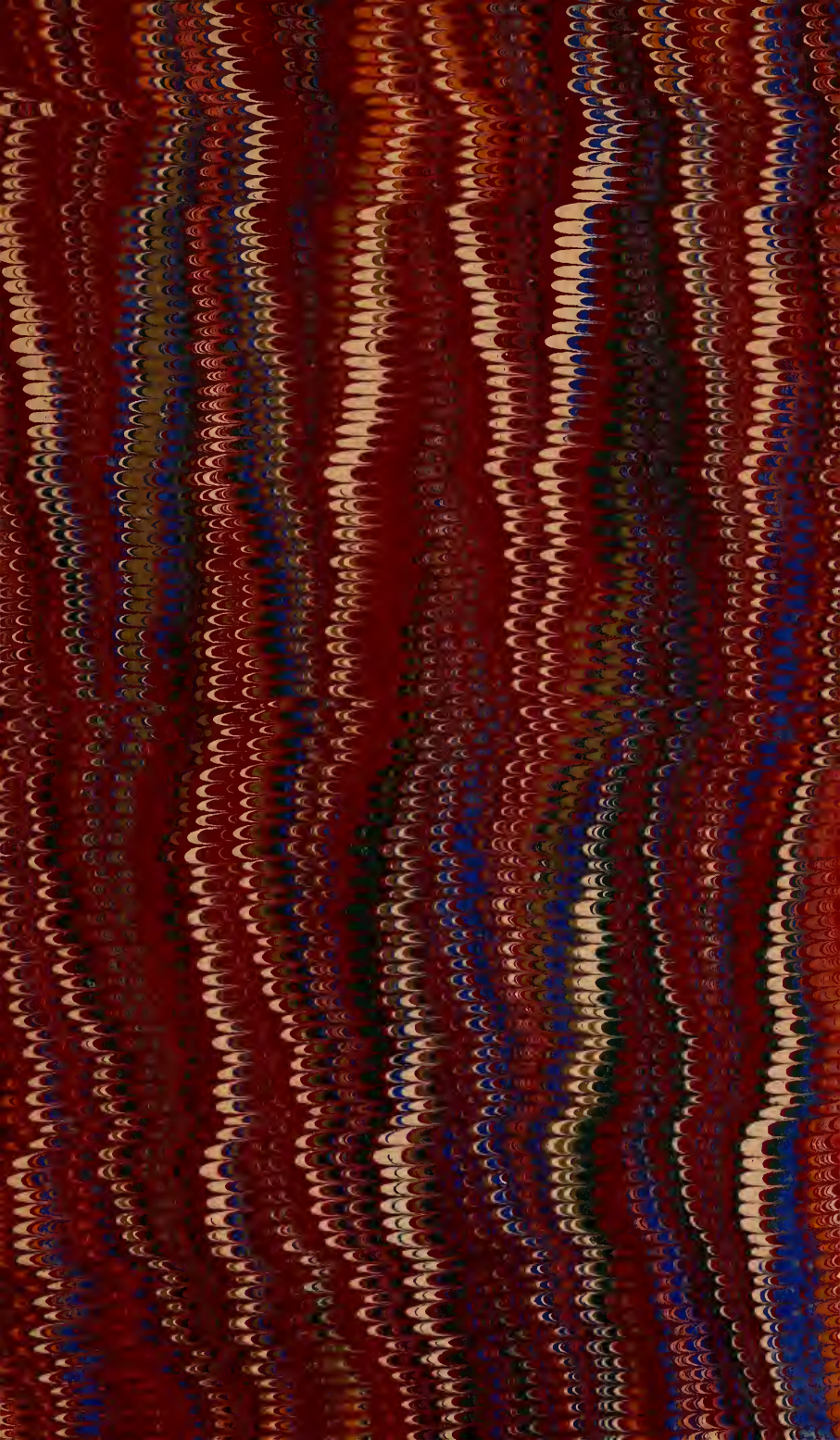
perpetuated by preserving in unfading freshness the memory of Washington. Only thus can we make sure that in coming and even far distant ages, there shall be generations of American freemen who will reverberate the hymns of liberty so long familiar to the ear of this free and christian land, and then as now voice forth in the cadences of grateful devotion,

“Great God we thank for this home,
This bounteous birth-land of the free,
Where wanderers from afar may come,
And breathe the air of liberty.
Still may her flowers untrammelled spring,
Her harvests wave, her cities rise,
And yet till time shall fold his wing
Remain earth’s loveliest paradise.”









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